Allandale Neighbor

Dec 2007
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Bells of the Season

C Yang

Neighborhood traditions like NUNA's (North University' Neighborhood Association) over-the-top lights on 37th Street near Hyde Park or Brentwood's luminarias which turn Arroyo Seco into a "*camino de luz*" (road of light) are festive signs of the holidays, but I also welcome the sounds of bells ringing.

This article is a reminder of bells…the bells that were once a key part of people's everyday life—back when we didn't have a watch around our wrist to help us tell time. Today, bells come in all different shapes and sizes and are used in a myriad of ways —from a small bell fastened to a cat's collar used to warn birds, an approaching ice cream truck, the quarter-hour chime at UT, their measured tones on a Sunday morning, or as a symbol, such as the 70,000-ton World Peace Bell, the world's largest swinging bell which hangs in Newport, Kentucky.

Continued on page 22

ANA President's Letter: A Look Back at 2007

Tom Linehan

It has been a very busy 2007 for Allandale. Unfortunately a lot of the activity was driven by Lincoln's plans for redevelopment of Northcross. What follows are headlines from some of the stories posted to the web site that provide a nice glimpse of what took place these past eleven months.

January

- Request Submitted to the City of Austin for a New Northcross Traffic Impact Analysis
- List of Issues Submitted to the City Regarding the Northcross Redevelopment
- Newsletter Survey Results Regarding Northcross
- Fundraising Preparations Underway
- Gretchen and Paul Announce Their Resignations

February

- RG4N Meeting in Today's Paper
- It's My Park Day
- Wrap Around Wal-Mart in the News
- VMU at Our Doorstep?
- Managed Lanes Open House

March

- Wal-Mart/Lincoln Open House Monday
- Northcross Term Sheet
- Vertical Mixed Use Is Coming to Burnet
- Plans for the Farmers Market

April

- ANA's Response to Lincoln and Wal-Mart's Term Sheet
- The North Village Branch Replacement Project to Begin

Continued on page 2

Issue Highlights:

2008 Membership Goal 3
Welcome New Board Members . . .6
Lincoln/Northcross Suit Update . . .5
Zoning 8
Deed Restrictions vs Zoning 9
Expanded VMU at 5350 Burnet . .10
Recap of Real Estate in 2007 11
Masquerade Ball 12
Body Business 14
Tango with Laura Pellegrino 15
Sustainable Neighborhoods 17

as well as our regular articles Texas Cooperative Extension, Constable's Notebook, Gullett News, ANA President's Letter, ANA Meeting Notes and Dog Talk

Happy Holidays and New Year to All! The next ANA EC Meeting is on December 27.

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ANA Executive Committee

PRESIDENT Tom Linehan
VICE PRESIDENT
TREASURER Joe Reynolds
SECRETARY Allan McMurtry
MEMBERS Margie Gordon, Dan Jones, Paulette Kern, Donna Beth McCormick, Mary Jean Matus, George Roman, and Laura Slaughter

ANA General Meetings are held March and September on the fourth Thursday. The Executive Committee meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Yarborough Library, 2200 Hancock Drive, and on the fourth Thursday every month. Meetings are open to the public.

Committees

BEAUTIFICATION Linnea Anderson
BYLAWS Allan McMurtry
COMMUNICATIONS Tom Linehan
FUNDRAISING Joe Reynolds
MEMBERSHIP Joe Reynolds
NOMINATING Allan McMurtry
ZONING Paulette Kern

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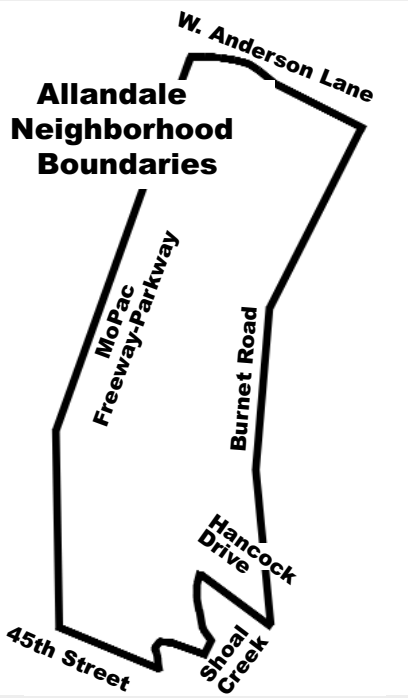

ANA President's Letter

Continued from page 1

- Pros and Cons of VMU
- North Village Branch Library Groundbreaking Ceremony

May

- Wal-Mart Modifies Size of Supercenter
- First Ever Allandale Tyke and Bike Ride

June

- ANA Submits VMU Application
- Update on Northcross Development
- Allandale Executive Committee Votes to File Lawsuit
- Second Site Plan Approved

July

- Allandale Neighborhood Association Sues the City of Austin
- Friscos
- ANA Supports Campaign to Resist Moving Animal Shelter
- Gaston/Bull Creek/W. 25th Street Wastewater Improvement Project
- Tribute to Austin's Beloved Local Historian and Allandale Neighbor: Ed Van De Vort

August

- Apartments Proposed for Antique Mall Lot
- City Plans Improvements to the Storm Drain System on White Rock Drive
- Where is Terry's?

September

- Call for a Growth Management Policy
- Keeping up with Progress on the White Rock Flooding Project

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October

- Whole Foods Selling Sun Harvest
- Dressing the Part - a Masquerade Ball
- Locals that Made the Best of List
- Brentwood Tavern is Closing October 25th
- Great Northern Repaved

November

- Frisco's to Move Up the Road
- It's Been a Long Haul But It's Not Over
- Council Unanimously Approves VMU Project on Burnet Road

Here's to the New Year. Peace and joy to all! ❖

Happy Holidays!

2008 Membership Goal—1,000 ANA Members

Tom Linehan

We want one thousand households to become members of the Allandale Neighborhood Association this year. Given that we have approximately 3,100 households in the neighborhood, that goal should be doable. Cost of membership is $15 for regular members, $7 for seniors. This is a good bargain especially if you compare it some Home Owner Associations that have a mandatory $150 a year fee.

Here is why joining ANA is important. It shows you care about having a healthy neighborhood association looking after your interests. There are quite a few us who volunteer a number of hours on behalf of the neighborhood whether it's participating in a cleanup day or testifying before city council regarding a zoning case or helping organize an event or writing an article for this newsletter. A healthy membership lets those volunteering their time know their efforts are appreciated. The second reason is it demonstrates the strength of the neighborhood association.

Some of the things we will be working on in 2008 include a membership drive, Celebrate Allandale Picnic, Tyke and Bike Ride, 4th of July Parade, Masquerade Ball, collection and recording of deed restrictions, VMU along Burnet and Anderson, bylaws review, Allandale web site, and more. We are getting more zoning variance notifications than we probably ever have before, at least during my involvement with the neighborhood association.

We are making it even easier to sign up this year. You can fill out and mail in your check in the enclosed envelope (please set it aside right now in a place so you'll remember), or you can go to the website: www.allandalereporter.org and pay online. This is the first year we've offered an online option.

Remember, a neighborhood association is only as strong as who it speaks for.

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Allandale Special General Meeting: November 29, 2007

Allan McMurtry

In a filled room of the Northwest Austin Recreation Center Thursday, November 29, the General Membership made and carried, overwhelmingly, a motion to file an appeal of the Allandale Neighborhood Association (ANA) lawsuit if the Responsible Growth for Northcross (RG4N) lawsuit fails. The motion carried by greater than a 10-to-1 margin.

It was an evening filled with data, information, discussion, and legal advice. Sets of minutes, a chronology of the suit, and a complete accounting of ANA finances were available at the beginning of the meeting, and the lawyers for Allandale arrived after the preliminaries to discuss the issues and options.

Joe Reynolds laid out the finances of the ANA, currently $19,986.87 in the general fund, savings, and legal fund accounts. At the close of business on January 24, 2007, the general fund and savings accounts (there was no legal fund) held uncommitted assets of $13,706.23. The current liabilities include a bill for legal services of $30, 892.36. To date, the ANA has raised a net of $36,807.82.

The law firm represented by Bruce Bigelow has set up a payment schedule for Allandale that can be met. If the appeal is successful, ANA will ask for attorneys' fees. As a point of reference, it was noted that the City of Austin has paid legal counsel $425,000 to fight the efforts to obtain a public hearing on the Northcross site plan.

Allan McMurtry laid out the chronology of events dating back to 2005, the issues facing ANA, and the city actions leading up to the lawsuit and the legal challenge taken by Allandale. He also covered the two other significant lawsuits filed within Allandale: the action against the now defunct Allandale Baptist Church and the lawsuit against the Texas Highway Department over the cross town, elevated freeway down Koenig and Allandale. He pointed out that both of those successful lawsuits began with a defeat.

Katie Hansen discussed the issues of the legal steps ANA had taken. This included the reasoning behind pursuing a declaratory judgment. She also described the legal events that had occurred between the July 3rd filing by ANA and the hearing before Judge Cooper on November 1, 2007.

The lawyers for Allandale, Bruce Bigelow and Maura Phelan, took center stage to explain what had happened in the intervening 10 months. They described the legal reasoning for our position: the city ordinance was clear and to the point that a Public Hearing was required of the Lincoln Property (owners of Northcross) site plan. This did not occur; therefore, a new site plan must be filed and processed.

The new site plan would require a public hearing and allow citizens of Allandale to present facts and documents to the city council on an array of problems created by such a large retail facility.

The floor was opened for discussion by ANA president Tom Linehan; 10-12 people took about 3 minutes to raise issues or make points. At the conclusion of that session, a motion for the solution to the current question of whether to pursue an appeal came from Barbara Grant. After two friendly amendments, the final motion passed as follows: "I move that we vote to appeal this recent judgment; should RG4N's lawsuit fail, Allandale will file its appeal immediately; if the RG4N case prevails, we will not appeal." After earnest discussion, the vote was taken. There were 35 registered voters for the motion and 3 registered voters against it. ❖

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Update on the Lincoln/Northcross Suit

Allan McMurtry

As you know by now, our motion for summary judgment asking the court to rule that the City of Austin was required by its rules to hold a public hearing on this site plan was denied by Judge Cooper. The winning argument was that since Wal-Mart changed the site plan to read "Retail Space" rather than "Garden Center", there was no requirement to hold a public hearing.

Our argument was that you cannot deny a public hearing simply because the site plan was ultimately changed several weeks before the site plan was approved. We argued that the public hearing should be predicated on what the applicant proposed at the time the public hearing was supposed to be held, not be denied based on something the applicant might or might not say at some point in the future. In that case, a public hearing would never be held, as an applicant could put in for grocery store and at the last minute change the description to something so general as to be indefinable.

Additionally, some of us find it incredible that the City of Austin has now funded outside attorneys to the tune of over $400,000 to oppose a neighborhood association's request for a public hearing. Besides the amount of money we have to raise to ask to be heard in a public forum, we end up paying for the defense that opposes a public process.

On the positive side, the judge did rule that ANA had standing to take such issues before a court of law. In the future, our ability to protect this neighborhood will be easier to demonstrate.

This has been a difficult loss for ANA. By the time you read this article, ANA will have already held a General Membership meeting on our options. We may also know if the legal strategy pursued by RG4N was more successful.

From this legal action, we have started the Allandale Picnic, the Tyke and Bike Rally, and the October Masquerade Ball. We will continue to build on what Allandale is and what its citizens want it to be. Please join us; the fun is just beginning.

In closing, let me thank each of you for your interest and support in this issue. The Association remains open to discussions of its actions and holds monthly public meetings of the Executive Committee. ❖

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for an update
on the recent
General Membership Meeting

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Welcome to Our New Board Members

Mary Jean Matus, Margie Gordon, Donna Beth McCormick

Mary Jean Matus

How long have you been in Austin? How long in Allandale?

Moved to Austin in 1975. 7 years in Allandale.

What made you decide to join the ANA Board?

It's incredible to me how much people in this NA have put out for the sake of this neighborhood. I guess the biggest reason I decided to join the Board is to be of service—to do my part.

How long have you been involved with the neighborhood association and in what capacity?

I first became involved with the ANA in the fall of 2006 when the Statesman announced plans for the Wal-Mart Supercenter at Northcross. I started working with the fundraising committee shortly thereafter and am proud to have had the opportunity to work with a great team of people to help organize the spring picnic "Celebrate Austin" and the ANA Masquerade Ball. Although the impetus for these events came from an urgent need to raise funds, I'm very hopeful that these events—and the Tyke and Bike too—will be the first of many—alongside Allandale's 4th of July parade (50+ years and counting).

What one or two things do you like most about Allandale?

To me Allandale is a "living" neighborhood. We know our neighbors, we walk/bike to neighborhood schools, and we have families young and old, DINKS, singles. I love being able to pretty much conduct my life within a 10-minute radius with great choices in unique local business/dining, entertainment, and every extracurricular my kids can come up with. I love running into people I know everywhere I go. It's the first time in my life I've ever felt really connected to my neighborhood.

If you had a good friend visit from out of town and this was their first time to Austin, where would you take them?

We'd stand in line for free Austin City Limit tickets (any show), have breakfast at Trudy's Star Cafe or Elsie's, go swimming at Barton Springs or Deep Eddy, go to Z-Tejas for happy hour, and end up Jovita's for the Cornell Hurd show—on Day 1. After that it would be coffee on the front porch and margaritas on the back, my husband's barbeque, sunset at Mount Bonnell and music down on South Congress or Antone's, unless of course there was a music freebie going on.... Too many things to list.... Our visitors never overstay their welcome but always come back for more.

What CD do you have in your car's CD player now?

None. Being in the car so infrequently and for such short period of times, I take the opportunity to catch news/music on KUT or music on KLBJ.

Margie Gordon

How long have you been in Austin? How long in Allandale?

In Austin 14 years. In Allandale, 2 ½ years.

What made you decide to join the ANA Board?

I feel passionate about preserving the

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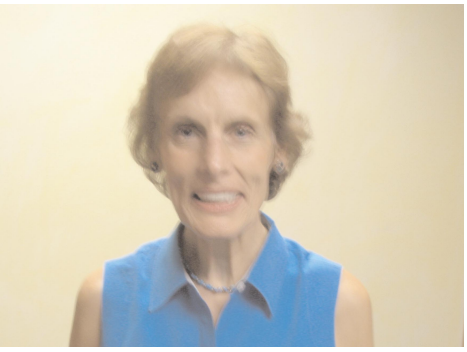

Margie Gordon

excellent quality of life for which Allandale has a reputation and hope to have a say in the current issues facing ours and other central Austin communities. After attending several ANA Board meetings, gathering signatures, becoming a block captain, and talking with Allan McMurtry whose business is adjacent to my property, I inquired about serving on the Board who represents the residents/businesses of our wonderful neighborhood.

How long have you been involved with the neighborhood association and in what capacity?
I have been involved in neighborhood association activities for 2 years now.

What one or two things do you like most about Allandale?
I love Allandale's central location and its convenience to everything. I also love the establishment of this area—its big trees, its hike & bike trail along Shoal Creek Boulevard, and its big park.

If you had a good friend visit from out of town and this was their first time to Austin, where would you take them?
I would take a good friend to Zilker Park and swimming in Barton Springs, to the capitol, to the Bob Bullock Museum, to the UT campus, to Whole Foods on 6th Street, to Town Lake for kayaking, and for dinner/drinks at the Oasis above Lake Travis. I'd also take him/her to Esther's Follies and to several live music venues, including the Broken Spoke.

What CD do you have in your car's CD player now?
Right now I have no CD in my car— I just cleaned everything out. Normally, though, I listen to a wide variety of music, including jazz, light rock, country western, and bluegrass.

Donna Beth McCormick

How long have you been in Austin?
I first came to Austin as a student in 1955. I first moved to Allandale as a new bride in 1962—marriage did not last, but the neighborhood did. After working in Dallas, Houston, and living out of state, I moved back to Allandale in 1982 and have lived here since then. My parents moved here in the late 60s, so this has been a place I have been coming to for a long time.

Donna Beth McCormick

What made you decide to join the ANA Board?
I was asked to join to Board in the summer of 2007. I had always attended neighborhood meetings and been interested, but we have more issues pertaining to growth that need to be addressed and I think that because I am very political, I could help.

How long have you been a Board member?
Since July 2007

What one or two things do you like most about Allandale?
Allandale is 5 minutes from most of the places I want to be shopping, 10 minutes from town most of the time, easy access to MoPac, Lamar. It's a neighborly place to live. Residents have a common interest in their lives—wanting to be here.

If you had a good friend visit from out of town and this was their first time to Austin, where would you take them?
Drive them around to the historic places—Capitol, Governor's Mansion, UT, down Congress Ave, 360 to see the views from there.

What CD do you have in your car's player now?
I have a tape player—old car—and rarely listen to either. I have a lot of CDs and tapes, but that's not my thing. I don't listen in the house either. I try to listen to the radio, but the Austin stations are awful for the most part so if I listen to a station it's 91.5 out of Killeen, easy listening. I have a player I can plug in and I'm listening to Harry Potter at the present. ❖

Hope Food Pantry (600 E. 50th St.) provides food, personal care items & social service info to over 600 people a month in your community. Please support your neighbors by attending our **1st Annual Hunger Meal Fundraiser on Jan. 27, 2008**, at 5 p.m. inside of St. John's United Methodist Church, 2140 Allendale Rd. At the Hunger Meal participants will be randomly divided into 3 groups (upper income status, middle income status & lower income status) that mirror Travis Country hunger statistics. The upper income group will be served a 4 course meal with appetizer, salad, dinner & desert. The middle income group will be served a BBQ dinner & the lower income group will have beans & rice. Advance tickets are $12 a piece or 5 for $50. Tickets bought the day of the event are $15 each. Contact Earley Ullrich at *swdolphins@yahoo.com* or at 374-0411 for more info or to buy tickets. Thank you on behalf of your neighbors.

Zoning

Paulette Kern

Zoning has been very busy lately. Numerous cases have been overseen by various neighbors and I want to thank you for being willing to step up and help protect your neighborhood. We have had several cases of resubdivision; one of which over on Finley Drive had a very successful, creative conclusion due to the actions of surrounding neighbors. Hats off to you all!

Collecting deed restrictions on the various subdivisions in Allandale is still a goal, but I could really use some help. If anyone is interested in taking on this project, organizing it and doing some leg work, let me know (454-9166).

I appreciate the couple residents who have sent me their deed restrictions.

Thanks to Cathy Yang's initiative, you have a handy chart to help you answer some of your questions about zoning and deed restrictions. I really appreciate her taking the initiative in pulling it together.

We have many developers wanting to maximize homes in our area and others wanting to maximize commercially zoned properties on the edge of Allandale.

The case I would like to cameo here is the 5350 Burnet Road property (present site of the Antique Mall), but not for long! On Thursday, November 8, the surrounding neighbors and the ANA failed in their efforts to stop the VMU designation (zoning change request) on this site, which will now have one large 4-story building containing 165 apartments over retail, wrapped around a 4-story parking garage.

This development will be a 60' tall box stretching from the rear of the property to within approximately 15' of Burnet Road It will have a density level of 68.75 (1 & 2 bedroom) units/acre—a number approaching downtown density. The city council voted 7-to-0 in favor of this development and endorsed it as a "poster child" for Burnet Road development, even though it is lacking in the tenets of VMU, such as walkability, connectivity, open space, sufficient mixed uses, and neighborhood draw.

When speaking with councilman McCracken, we were told that the city will levy no density caps on VMU and that the neighborhoods have a responsibility to give density on the transit corridors because we were given the McMansion Ordinance to protect the single-family homes in the neighborhood.

Furthermore, we will have to endure the traffic problems created in the next 10 or more years until there are enough VMU projects in a row to effectively reduce traffic due to the needs of the people living in VMU being met by the retail on the ground floor of these projects. Therefore, they will not get into their cars 3 times a day to run errands.

Mr. McCracken believes that the density of these projects must be averaged with the density of SF-2 around it to get actual density. We received no answer to our queries about mass transit or other infrastructure improvements.

In all of the meetings I've attended on VMU, I have never heard this level of density being discussed for Burnet Road. If you have concerns about the future of Burnet Road, I strongly suggest that you contact council members early and often.

I want to thank all the neighbors who spent countless hours in meetings with the developer, writing letters, talking to council members, passing a petition, etc., and for their help in opposing this zoning change request. ❖

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Deed Restrictions vs Zoning

C Yang

Deed Restrictions

Deed restrictions are contractual and based on free choice

Why?

Preserve the residential character
Preserving the livability of a neighborhood

What is it?

Private contract between all owners in a subdivision
Homeowners contractually agree to certain property restrictions when they move into a home with a deed restriction
Agreement that restricts, or limits, the use or activities that may take place on property

Where can you find it?

Runs with the title to the land and is filed as record
Conveys with the property and binds all future property owners to the condition of agreement.
County Clerk's office with deed records
www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/geninfo3.htm

Enforcement

Civil matter
Property owner(s) is the driving force behind enforcement
City does not enforce deed restrictions
Can be difficult over the long term
Private contractual issue may not be a constitutional issue
Send a letter notifying offending property owner of the violation via certified or registered mail
Hire a lawyer—threaten to file or actually file suit to get restrictions enforced
Jointly hire a lawyer with your neighbors to share the legal fees
Legal fees could be as high as $20k or more

Why Enforce

Protect value of your home
Maintains the integrity of a neighborhood
If neighbors do not object to a breech in deed restrictions in a timely manner, there are future ramifications, e.g., relinquishes future legal right to enforce deed restrictions

Vs. Zoning

Deed restrictions prevail if more stringent than zoning, e.g., if zoning allows for more density

Zoning

Zoning is political and mandatory

Why?

Protects the neighborhood and provides for the safety, health, and welfare
Promotes compatible patterns of land use

What is it?

Public—controlled by local government
Reflects the judgment of the local governing body
Based on recommendations from the planning commission
Permitting system to prevent new development from harming existing residents or businesses

Where can you find it?

Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department
505 Barton Springs Road, 5th Floor, Austin, Texas, 78704
www.ci.austin.tx.us/planning

Enforcement

City government matter
Non-compliance begins a process that may involve the municipal courts
Falls under the police power rights; state governments may exercise over private real property
Zoning complaint
www.ci.austin.tx.us/codec/zon%5Fcomplaint%5Fprocess.htm
Zoning requests are heard by the Planning Commission then the City Council acts on the request the following month
www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/zonginfo1.htm
Zoning variances and interpretations may be appealed to the board of adjustments.
City Council approvals or approvals with conditions result in a city ordinance which must be voted on and approved
Permitting handled by city officials at One Texas Center in
Code enforcement people are also at One Texas Center

Why Enforce

Protect the character of the neighborhood

Vs. Deed Restriction

Zoning prevails if zoning is more stringent than your deed restrictions, e.g., zoning says one story height limit and deed restriction says two

See a more comprehensive zoning and deed restriction chart on our website at www.allandalereporter.org.

Expanded VMU at 5350 Burnet Road Approved

Tom Linehan

A group of Allandale Neighborhood Association (ANA) representatives and affected neighbors spoke before the City Council in November to oppose a proposed variance request by Ardent Properties regarding the 5350 Burnet Road (Antique Marketplace) property for an expanded vertical mixed use (VMU) development.

We were unsuccessful. Instead of opposing a VMU development at the site Allandale expressed concern about the increased density of the project and the resulting traffic it would generate on Burnet Road.

Steven Zettner presented a variation of the project that would make it more pedestrian friendly and become the start of a pedestrian walkway leading down to the Yarborough library. Regardless, we were unsuccessful. The variance was granted by a unanimous vote of the council.

Council member Lee Leffingwell added two friendly amendments at our request which placed a cap on the number of residential units allowed at this site to 175, and prohibited a driveway on to Lawnmont.

By way of background, Carr Development came to ANA two years ago asking for support for a height variance on a mixed use development at this site which ANA supported. What was presented to ANA at the time was a mixed use development that consisted of retail and 88 owner-occupied units. Mr. Carr received the height variance allowing him to go to 60 feet on his proposed development.

In July, Allandale learned that Ardent Properties was given an option to buy the property from Carr and wanted to do something very different. Instead of 88 (2-bedroom) owner-occupied units, Ardent proposed to nearly double the number of units, essentially going to 165 plus (1-2 bedroom) rental units.

The outcome of the vote came as no surprise to those of us in attendance. Preliminary meetings with council members and council member staff made it clear that VMU is the city mantra and Burnet Road is the poster child for it.

Council member Brewster McCracken's comments on the Burnet Road when expounding on the City's intentions with VMU zoning in the agenda item and details for the variance request from this meeting can be found on the city's website: *www.ci.austin.tx.us/council_meetings/wams_item_attach.cfm?recordID=7831* (Conduct a public hearing and approve an ordinance amending Chapter 25-2 of the Austin City Code by rezoning property locally known as 5350 Burnet Road (Shoal Creek watershed) from general commercial services-mixed use-conditional overlay (CS-MU-CO) combining district zoning to general commercial services-mixed use-conditional overlay (CS-MU-CO)combining district zoning to permit vertical mixed use on the site.) ❖

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Recap of Real Estate in 2007

Danny Gallant/Robin Senor

2007 has been an interesting year for real estate in Allandale, in Austin, and throughout the nation. Anyone who has been paying attention to the market has seen home values in our neighborhood climb and many properties selling at a frenzied pace earlier in the year.

Homes in Allandale have appreciated by an average of 18.34% from 2006 to 2007 (based on MLS sales data from January 1st to October 31st). For the same time period between 2005 and 2006, average appreciation was approximately half that amount, at 9.72%.

But the second half of the year slowed. It's been hard to miss the headlines about the national housing slump over the last few months, and Austin has not been unaffected by the slowdown. As of November 13th, 1,229 fewer homes have sold in Austin than during the same time period in 2006.

Many experts believe the reasons for our slowdown are somewhat different than they are in many other markets around the country. Tommy Nelms of The Nelms Team at Land Mortgage says that "many current buyers have been paralyzed by fear that they cannot qualify for a mortgage due to the recent news headlines and to changes in mortgage underwriting guidelines.

"The reality is that the changes only affect a very small percentage of the overall pool of buyers. Anyone with good credit and verifiable income, can qualify for a mortgage with little to no down payment.

"Buyers who fall into the 'No Doc' loan category, such as self employed individuals who write off expenses and show very little income on tax returns, can also qualify for mortgage loans, but gone are the days of zero down payments in these cases. Buyers in this category are typically required to put a minimum of 20% down on the purchase of a home."

Real estate markets are very local. Each city has its own market and even micro markets within its neighborhoods. Typically, a market shift in one city won't necessarily affect others, but in the current slowdown the blow to the subprime mortgage industry has had quite an impact on investors throughout the country and around the world.

At the time of this writing (mid-November), there are 51 homes available for sale in Allandale. Based on the rate at which homes have sold over the past few months, this represents 4.25 months of inventory. In other words, if the pace continues and no other homes were to come on the market, it would take 4.25 months to sell all of those 51 properties.

What does this mean to someone who needs to sell a house while competing with this much available inventory? It means that the property has to be in excellent condition and priced aggressively within the current market. Using sales data from 6 months ago is a mistake in our constantly changing market.

Overall, Austin is in very good shape and we are not experiencing the huge declines that much of the rest of the country is facing. Our economy is fantastic, with a 3.5% unemployment rate, 29,500 new jobs created from August '06 to August '07 and a huge number of people moving here continuously – 78 people per day on average.

These are all good things since real estate is traditionally a lagging indicator, as opposed to a leading one, and it will respond to what the local economy is doing. And of course, let us not forget all the reasons that people love Allandale and want to live here.

Seasons greetings to you and your families! ❖

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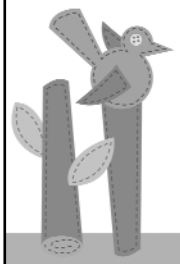

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2007 Allandale Masquerade Ball

Tom Linehan

Here's what I saw: a monarch butterfly, Dorothy and Scarecrow, pirates, a guy with rabbit ears, a tooth fairy, a pair of Wal-Mart greeters, a prisoner, and the devil. There was more but that's what I remember that I can put a name to. I'm talking about the first Allandale Masquerade Ball held at the Caswell House on October 27th. It was a blast!

There were some very fun costumes. Combine that with the rockin good sound of the LeRoi Brothers and food catered by Russell's Bakery and you get the idea. Laura Pelligrino, local tango instructor and musician, added to the event's interest by demonstrating two tango dances with partner Ector Gutierrez. Mary Jean and Milton Matus won best couples costume with their Dorothy and Scarecrow costume. Ami McChesney won best costume. She came as a monarch butterfly (see photos at *www.allandalereporter.org*)—very cool!

A big thanks to Laura Slaughter for coming up with the idea and to Laura, Marlene Meador, Mary Jean, and all of the volunteers for making it happen.

The silent auction generated close to $3,000

The silent auction generated close to $3,000. There were over 30 items donated. The Allandale Neighborhood Association thanks the following businesses and individuals for their donations: Amys and Phil's, Chilis, Alborz, Laura Pellegrino (tango lessons), Quacks, Billy's on Burnet, Merle Norman, Ana Brasil, Top Notch Restaurant, Slick Willies, Upper Crust Bakery, Bark n Purr, Stars in Your Eyes, Blue Moon Glassworks, Jorge's, Phoenicia Bakery & Deli, Knife Sharpest, Satay, John Keohane, El Mercado, Austin Homebrew, Clay Ways, Suzi's China Grill, Benihana, Nomadic Notions, Betty Rodriguez, Sasha's, Fonda San Miguel's, and The Light Bulb Shop. What a great showing of support from our local businesses. ❖

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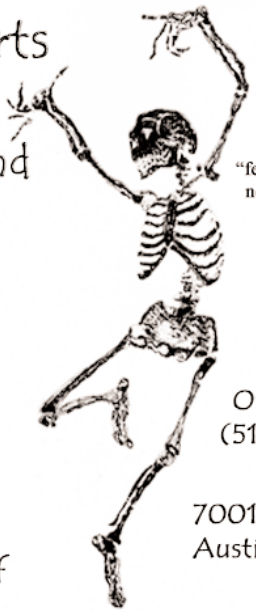

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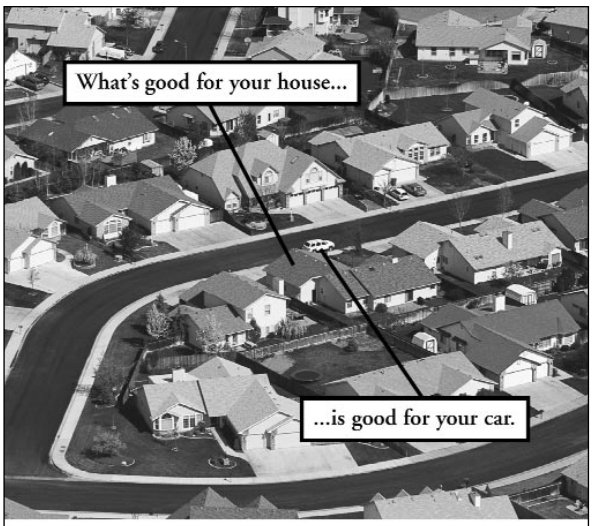

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Business Spotlight: Body Business

Robin Senor

Tucked away in the Alamo Village shopping center is an inconspicuous gym. Against the corporate mega-muscle megaplexes, Body Business, from the exterior seems a rather unimpressive gym. After all, how good can a gym in a shopping complex be?

Quite good, as it turns out. Not only has Body Business been in the business, of well, bodies, for 23 years, it has a very high retention rate both in Allandale and throughout town—something that many corporate gyms can't boast. While many other local gyms have come and gone, Body Business has stayed strong, and even opened a new location in Davenport Village in 2004.

Within the gym, it's clear that Body Business caters to a different crowd than national chains. The women's room features fresh cut flowers, large lockers, and new age music piping through. (in this member's opinion, it is hard to find a spa locker this nice, let alone a gym locker!).

Machines are kept clean and in impeccable condition, and all the facilities are truly spotless. A trainer is on duty at all times to answer any questions about exercises, machines and equipment. Classes like cardio pump and step challenge are consistently full, and the instructors seem to have a very true passion for what they do. Water classes are held throughout the day and are also popular.

Over the years, Body Business has won many awards, from local ones like Best Austin Gym by *Austin Fit* readers and *Citysearch*, to national awards such as being rated one of the top ten aerobics studios in the country by *Shape Magazine*. Body Businesses success and philosophy is driven in no small part by its owner, Susan Cooper. Susan still teaches classes herself at the studio, even with a large staff at each location, and each year throws a fully catered client appreciation party—with healthy choices, of course.

Body Business, 2700 West Anderson Lane 306-0557 *www.bodybusiness.com* ❖

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A Tango with Laura Pellegrino

Tom Linehan

Tango, a Latin dance form where the pauses…are as important as the movement is something I only know from the movies (I recommend "Assassination Tango" with Robert Duval), but it's not something you come across here in Allandale. So when I learned that Laura Pellegrino, a tango dancer, teacher, and professional musician was moving into the neighborhood I had to satisfy my curiosity. Laura and her dance partner Ector Gutierrez added interest to the Allandale Masquerade Ball by performing two dances. We visited in November where I was able to learn more about what it takes to tango.

How would you characterize tango as a dance form?
It's a very improvised dance. There is no real basic set. Learning it is similar to learning a language. Over time you will put it all together, improvise and evolve your own dance form. It's a very analytical dance. That's why you'll find it popular with a number of analytical types. It's very common to find physicist and other scientist in the tango community. When you first start tango, it's difficult because it's unlike any other dance form. Some people are able to pick it up relatively quickly, but for others it takes much longer. It doesn't really have anything to do with previous dance experience. Like most skills, a lot of it has to do with how well you take to it and how often you practice. For those who really enjoy tango, it can become very consuming.

How did you get into tango?
I had just moved to Baltimore to start a new job. I didn't know anyone and one of the first nights I was there I rented some foreign films. I have traveled a number of places, and speak French, Spanish and some Italian so it's not unusual for me to pick up a foreign film. In this case, I rented a movie that had a tango scene in it and it really caught my attention. I immediately researched places to take lessons in Baltimore and within a 20-day period I had taken 15 lessons.

Where do you find tango in a city?
It is something that is usually under the radar but like everything else these days you can easily hook up with tango groups on the internet. You will find who and where lessons are being offered, a calendar of tango events, and information about upcoming milongas (tango dance events). In Austin there is the upcoming Fandango de Tango Festival that will take place over the Thanksgiving holidays and will include classes, milongas and performances by a number of tango experts.

Where in the United States is tango most popular?
I would say New York, San Francisco and Portland. Believe it or not Portland has one of the highest per capita concentrations of tango dancers in the country.

What about Austin?
There are about 130 to 140 tango dancers in Austin and about the same number in Houston. Here in Austin, every Friday there is a Practica at UT's Student Union and a milonga once a month. You'll also find tango events at La Copa and Lamberts. The band that plays at a number of the tango events is Glover Gill. Currently he plays every Thursday night at Lamberts.

Where do you find tango Lessons in Austin?
I teach both private and group lessons. I rent space at a couple of places in town: Nia Space on South Congress and at Casa de Luz on Toomey Road, Esquina de Tango on the east side is another popular place for classes. Group lessons are typically $10 to $15. Private lessons are $65.

I know you've lived in Austin off and on. How is it you ended back here?
I'm not a native Austinite. I grew up in Tulsa. I lived in Austin back in the 90's

Laura Pellegrino

where I was a musician in a number of bands. I sing and play guitar. Most recently, I moved here from Buenos Aires after living there for two years. I had just completed a CD and realized that if I was to have any success marketing it I would need to be in U.S., and clearly Austin is a music city so it made sense for me to end up in Austin. Now that I'm here I'm finding a lot of interest in tango and having good success teaching classes.

I know you are just now moving into your house here in Allandale. How did you end up in Allandale?
I wanted to pretty much stay in central Austin when I did my house search. I once had a boyfriend who lived off of Shoal Creek south of 45th and I really liked the area. Given my budget and the fact it was central I think it was a good choice.

Welcome Laura to the neighborhood. If you're interested in finding out more about tango in Austin, you can go to *tangointexas.com* or email her at: laurapellegrino@earthlink.net. ❖

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A Note on Sustainable Neighborhoods

Steven Zettner

The City is mass-approving downtown density for Burnet, Lamar, Guadalupe and Anderson. And there's nothing in the new VMU ordinance requiring open space, mass transit, or even (strangely enough) real mixed use.

We want a voice in the densification of our neighborhoods. We view density as one responsible way for fighting suburban sprawl. It provides new tax revenues to maintain aging midtown infrastructure.

What we don't want is unplanned density slapped down piecemeal or in the wrong places. But that is what City Council supports.

Let us know that you're interested in this issue. Email us *SustainableNeighborhoods@gmail.com* for more information, or to get involved.

Thank you for helping to protect our neighborhoods!

Editor's Note: Sustainable Neighborhoods is a group of neighborhood advocates who are concerned about how the city is approaching density within central city neighborhoods. ❖

Gullett News

Stephanie Schultz-Smith

Reading Rewarded

For the third year in a row, the students at Gullett Elementary School won the citywide Reading is Fundamental (RIF) contest. RIF, the oldest and largest children and family nonprofit literacy organization in the U.S., prepares and motivates children to read by delivering free books and literacy resources to those children and families who most need them.

The Geckos raised more than $16,000 and were recognized October 24th at a school-wide assembly by AISD Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Pat Forgione. Money collected by Gullett students will buy nearly 6,500 books for area kids who have no books.

It Pays to Recycle

Gullett was awarded $500 to continue its recycling and grounds programs after being recognized as one of six Austin area schools for its recycling and conservation efforts. Keep Austin Beautiful partnered with the Longhorn Sports Network and the University of Texas for the 11th Annual Longhorn Recycling Roundup.

According to the group, Gullett and the other five schools selected to receive the award "exemplify creative ways to recycle waste and conserve resources, promote their effort campus-wide, and involve the community."

As part of the reward, Gullett representatives attended a UT football game on November 10 and received the $500 award at a halftime ceremony. The other schools joining Gullett to Keep Austin Beautiful were: Austin Discovery School, Bryker Woods Elementary School, Garza High School and Summitt Elementary School.

Carnival Atmosphere

McCallum's "Knights of Steel" steel drum band provided the entertainment for the latter part of the Gullett Carnival. The loud, spirited music was a perfect compliment to the fun and festive time students, parents and staff, as well as friends and neighbors enjoyed at

Continued on page 18

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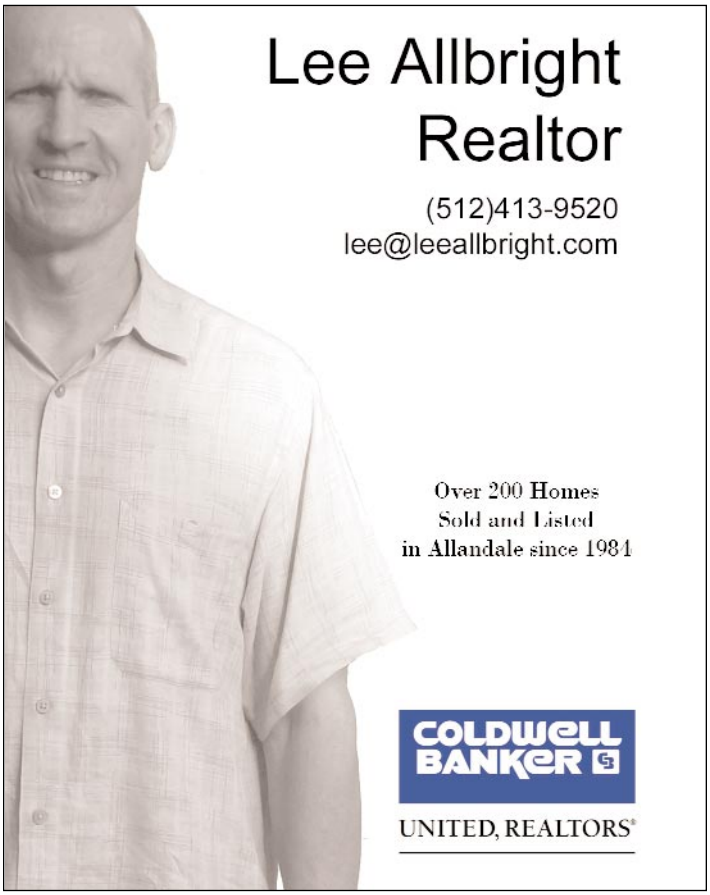

Gullett News

Continued from page 17

Gullett's November 3rd Carnival.

Highlights of the day included a climbing wall, a maze made out of boxes, the Pringle toss and of course, the ever-popular cake walk. The events were accompanied by great food from around Austin, including pizza from Craig O's, and foods from Generations BBQ and Austin's Greek Deli, as well as typical carnival fare – cotton candy, snow cones and popcorn.

Family, Food, Fitness and Fun

Gullett students often focus on the three R's, but on November 7, third through fifth graders introduced their families to the four F's—family, food, fitness and fun.

The event, sponsored by the school's award-winning wellness committee, provided the venue for families to sample Gullett's nutritional hot lunches and to participate in phys-ed and yoga demonstrations. Students in grades K-2 (and their families) will get the chance to participate in their own fitness night in the spring (May 7).

Take a (Winter) Break

Gullett students and faculty will be on break beginning Friday, December 21. Those involved with the school will be ready for the rest after a jam-packed December that includes:

- The Book Fair (December 3-7): Get your holiday gifts here! The community is invited to the weeklong event that includes a pizza night and late shopping opportunities on December 7. All funds raised go to the library and to help bring authors to the school.
- Winter program for kindergartners, and first and second graders (December 11 at 6:30 p.m.)
- Choir musical program (December 18 at 7 p.m.)
- Schoolwide party (December 19)

Students will return to class on January 8. School holidays early in the year are scheduled for January 21 and February 4.

Gullett Tours

Gullett administrators have scheduled three days early in the new year for families of prospective students to visit the school:

- Tuesday, January 15 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, February 7 at 9 a.m.
- Friday, February 29 at 8 a.m.

Visitors do not need to sign up for the events. Simply come to the office and sign in as a visitor.

On a related note, anyone who wants his/her child to attend Gullett in the 2008-09 school year who does not live within the Gullett boundary must request a transfer. The first day to request a transfer is February 2, 2008. Transfers should be submitted in person to AISD's central office.

Get Sporty in 2008

Marathon Kids: On February 23, Gullett students and their parents are invited to participate in the Marathon Kids Final Mile. The event will take place at Burger Stadium at 9 a.m. The school's physical education teacher, Patti Brauss, registers every Gullett student for Marathon Kids, an 11-year-old school and community-based fitness program.

Marathon Kids Austin kicked off the 2007-08 season on September 15 with the first mile. Over the course of the six-month program, students run and/or walk 26.2 miles. (In fact, Gullett students get their miles walking/running on the school track every day.) The endurance building running, walking and nutrition program aims to introduce good physical and nutritional habits in kids.

Sports Day: The always fun and challenging events at Gullett's Sports Day will take place sooner this year. Just prior to Spring Break, on March 6, the students at Gullett will test their athletic skills and just have fun with games and contests like sack races, tug o'war, and balance beam. Rain day is March 7. ❖

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Excluding Pests from Your Home

Wizzie Brown, Texas Cooperative Extension Program Specialist

With the weather turning cooler, many creatures will try to move indoors where temperatures are nice and cozy. With some simple tools and a thorough inspection, you can help reduce the number of pests that enter your home this winter.

Inside your home, look around doors and windows during the day. If you see daylight, then there isn't a good seal around the door and/or window. Inspect the attic for holes that may have been chewed by rodents or other small mammals to access the structure. Also, make sure that all attic vents are covered with stainless steel screening to block animals from entering. Outside, the perimeter of the home should be inspected for cracks and crevices in the foundation. Look at pipe and wire penetrations into the structure to see if they should be sealed.

Common ways to exclude pests from your home:

- Trim back trees and shrubs that touch or overhang the home
- Seal pipe and wire penetrations with steel wool, caulk or expanding foam
- Replace weather stripping around doors and windows if there is not a good seal
- Repair any window screens with holes
- For homes with brick or stone facades, stuff weep holes with steel wool* or copper mesh
- Inspect all furniture, boxes and bags for pests before carrying them into the home
- Inspect all plants for insect pests before bringing them into the home
- Do not store firewood inside the home or up against the outside walls
- Use sheet metal, hardware cloth or steel wool to seal any areas where animals have chewed to enter the home**

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas Cooperative Extension Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

---

*steel wool will rust if it gets wet, so do not use on light colored façade

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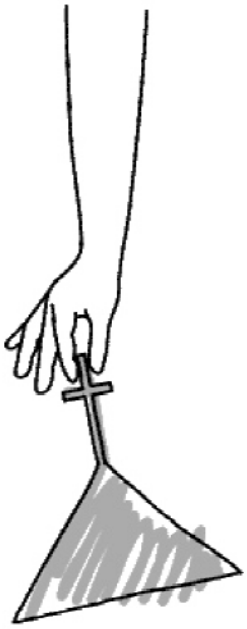

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Constable's Notebook –November 2007

Constable Bruce Elfant

Almost every day on my way home when I exit IH 35 at Airport I am greeted by one or more panhandlers with signs asking for money. A recent study conducted by the Center for Problem Oriented Policing found that most panhandlers are unemployed males in their 30s or 40s with substance abuse problems and few family ties. Some suffer from mental illnesses but not most.

Many have minor criminal records but are as likely to have been victims of crimes. Some are transient but many have been in the community for a long time. In Austin, some women and veterans resort to panhandling and yet there are some who would pose as mothers and veterans.

While most of us are pained by the sight of people begging for money on the streets, and our respective religions and belief systems all tell us that we should help the least amongst us, we are reluctant to give them money because we believe that it would be spent for alcohol or drugs.

The Austin City Council has scheduled a public hearing to consider an ordinance that would prohibit panhandling within 1,000 feet of public schools and daycare centers. The proposed ordinance is supported by Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo who said that "vehicles and pedestrians do not mix".

Council Member Jennifer Kim cited the 211 solicitation citations within 1,000 feet of schools as evidence of creating an unsafe environment. Opponents argue that the vast majority of panhandlers are not aggressive, do not jump into traffic, and the current ordinance prohibits people from blocking traffic.

Richard Troxell, a long time Austin advocate for the homeless expressed his concern that "panhandling is a big sign that there is a disease in our community and outlawing panhandling does not attack the root causes of why people choose something so humiliating, dangerous, and frankly hardly worthwhile financially."

Austin is far from alone in its attempts to limit panhandling. Nearly half of all U. S. cites have passed some type of limits on panhandling in particular public places. Many cities that have attempted to enact de facto bans on all solicitation (including Austin) have been rebuffed by the courts as a violation of free speech.

City ordinances that more narrowly addressed panhandling by prohibiting "aggressive" panhandling such as touching, screaming, accosting, or blocking, or asking for money in a confined space have met with more success in the courts. Some cities have required panhandlers to be licensed while other cities have urged their citizens to instead donate to social service agencies dedicated to helping those who want to be helped.

It is not clear whether the proposed panhandling ordinance will pass or withstand constitutional muster. But we know that by simply outlawing the symptom of panhandling (with aggressive enforcement) city council members cannot make the underlying problem go away.

Any productive discussion of regulating panhandling should also include a better understanding of why people resort to begging for money on public streets and what can be done to help.❖

Dog Talk: Multiple Dogs

Cheryl Silver

This article is for people who have at least one dog and are adding another and want everyone to live harmoniously. The suggestions are far from comprehensive.

First, avoid purchasing a dog who has been taken from its litter prior to 8-10 weeks of age. If removed from the litter too early, the dog will not learn

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critical skills including bite inhibition. You are buying avoidable problems if you get a younger pup.

Next—if you are going to get two dogs at the same time, avoid getting littermates. If you do get littermates, they will need individualized training and one-on-one time with you so they can function independently. Additionally, one of the pups is likely to become quite bossy and the other is likely to have its personality suppressed.

Finally—get a dog of the opposite sex from the one you already have. The toughest pairing is having two females. With dogs of the opposite sex, the girl will likely boss the boy around and he will be fine with it <smile>.

Routines are good. Dogs love routine—capitalize on this. Build routines into your daily activities. Routines are easily established at feeding time, in the order in which dogs are fed and given treats, places where dogs to sleep/rest, exercise time, and order in which dogs are exercised, and the use of set words and phrases for cues. (Every time I take my dogs into the house from the car, I say, "In the house!," even though they are on leash. Once my son left the back door open; four of my dogs left! It was dark outside. When I realized they were loose, I went outside and called, "In the house!" and they all ran in the front door! So you see, routines can really help.)

Crate train your dogs. Properly done, the dogs love their crates and this tool can make life much easier.

Make training part of your daily activities—not a special event. Positive training methods will keep your dog focused on you and instills confidence and competence in your dogs. Training stimulates and challenges them and enhances your communication with them.

When training new skills crate the other dogs where they can observe your activities so they can watch and learn! Typically, it makes the crated dogs eager to participate when it is their turn.

Learn how to head off fights. Be proactive. Separate dogs when they appear to be getting over-stimulated or when you know something very stimulating is about to take place. Be upbeat when you separate them—make it a positive event, e.g., crate them each with a special chew toy or kong. If you act agitated, they will get agitated.

Learn how to break up a fight. Plan ahead; have a place in mind where you will put each dog, separate from the others, so you can examine each dog and let them calm down.

Recognize (then manage) the "triggers" that will ignite conflict. Examples of triggers include: too much excitement, a piece of food or a doggie treat that drops on the floor, competition for a toy that has been tossed for a game of fetch.

Recognize that the dynamics in your multi-dog pack are always evolving. Aging, illness, surgeries, loss of vision/hearing, extended absences or other events, such as a dog having a litter or even going into heat can destabilize the order your dogs are accustomed to. Modify your routine.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss this topic in greater depth. I am always here to help....never any charge. *csilver2@austin.rr.com* 454-7219 ❖

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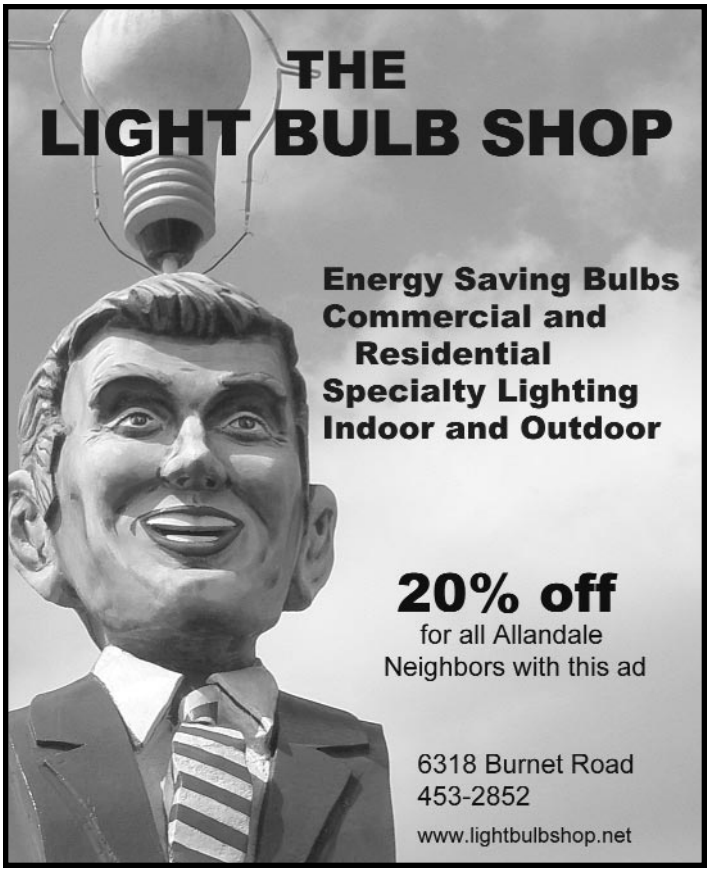

Bells of the Season

Continued from page 1

As Bill Hibbert, of Surrey said so well on his website, bells have "the power to charm, to amaze, to warn, to frighten, and to lift the spirit." This time of year, bells signal the arrival of the holiday season and herald in the new year.

City sidewalks, busy sidewalks.
Dressed in holiday style

The Sound of Bells Around Allandale

Allandale is fortunate to have two churches with a rich history of using bells — St Louis Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection.

St Louis Church has six bronze (78% copper and 22% tin) bells. These are known as tower bells and rely on pulling of attached ropes to ring. The history of tower bells is ancient, and though not known for lyrical music, the sounds are engaging.

These bells were made in Holland, with the largest bell weighing over 1400 pounds, and measuring 40 inches in diameter and 33 inches tall. When played together, this is called a peal, where each bell also has its owned defined function. For example, one of the smaller bells alone is rung for daily mass, the largest for funerals, and all of them for important holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

These bells, donated by the Joseph, Lyons and Dehan family, were consecrated in 1998. In the future, the church hopes to add six additional bells to create a chime, which would then allow for the playing of hymns. A "ring of bells" is a set of 4 to 12 or more bells used in change ringing, a particular method of ringing bells in patterns. A peal may have bells playing for several hours, capable of playing 5,000 or more patterns without a break or repetition.

Mark Fish, the music director, has been trained to ring the bells, which is no easy task if you don't want the bells to flip over and the ropes to get tangled and you can hear them every weekend mass at 7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

The Episcopal Church of the Resurrection is known for its electric carillon. Chimes are generally 8-12 bells, though there can be as many as 22 bells where each bell is individually controlled by its own ringer. Carillons are made up of 23 bells to more than 80 bells but these do not swing and do not need ringers.

St. Louis Bell Tower

Episcopal Church of the Resurrection

The first tuned carillon was cast Holland in 1652. Where tower bells are limited to simple one line melodies, a carillon is capable of playing music ranging from two to six octaves because of the way its bells are built and tuned. Most music is written for four or more octaves, so that 47-49 bells would be needed to reach a four-octave range.

Electronic carillons were first commercialized in 1933 and became a popular choice with the rising cost of manufacturing bells, the building of towers to house these, maintenance and training of bellringers or carilloneurs,

The carillon at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection first donated as a memorial, has been in place since 1984. The church chose their electric carillon from Pennsylvania-based Schulmerich. It is controlled by a circuit board and programmable to play Westminster clock chimes, hymns and other celebratory music.

Jim Heath, who was in charge of the carillon for the past 15 years, was gracious to spend time showing and playing it for me. I asked him if there were any special qualifications needed for his job. He modestly admitted that since he was not musical, it was mental aptitude and more importantly, he received great pleasure and satisfaction serving the church and the neighborhood

The Episcopal Church of the Resurrection's carillon is programmed to announce the time every hour and half hour from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day except Sunday, when it's played at noon, 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. A call to service chime is also set to ring five minutes before each church service, and there are also wedding bells and other special requests. The church's library of tapes includes Episcopal hymns, as well as patriotic and holiday music that are played for several days around the date of a celebration.

Jim was also kind enough to share with me some of the stories about how the carillon has to be maintained. Just like every electronic device, it is prone to power failures, time change, and even an occasion circuit board failure.

St. Louis Bell Ropes

Fortunately, Schulmerich is one of the world largest manufacturers, and has a rep on hand who can be there in a short amount of time and minimize downtime.

From December 2 until the 24, advent music will be featured at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, followed by hymns marking the twelve days of Christmas. Each hymn lasts about one minute and can be heard at 5 minutes past 10 a.m., 12 p.m., 3 p.m., and 5 p.m. A popular place to listen is on the two benches in the alcove on the eastern edge of the building, where you may meet some residents of the nursing home next door who come over to sit in the sunshine, and gain a little joy from listening to the bells.

Children laughing,
People passing,
Meeting smile after smile

Bells Around Austin

While Allandale is fortunate to have a wonderful selection of bells, others can be heard throughout Austin. The oldest one is most likely the one at St Davids Episcopal Church, which has hung for over 100 years.

St Davids, built in the mid-1800s, is one of the oldest church structures, besides missions, on this side of the Mississippi. The church had their tower donated as a gift, but the real story is that they were able to get their bell when it was decided that it was too small for the Texas State Capitol, for which it was originally designed.

This single tower bell has a pull rope attached which is manually pulled by the sexton at 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. on weekdays and to announce the beginning of services on Sunday. It is also rung for weddings, funerals, and prayer. This bell rings in the key of B.

Austin's most famous bells are the Kniker Carillon housed in UT's Tower. The Tower, UT's Beaux-Arts style building and symbol of UT since its completion in 1937, houses the largest carillon in Texas. It is also one of the dozen or so largest in the country, both in number of bells and tonnage.

This 56-bell carillon, originally planned for 36 bells, started as 17-bell chime in 1936. In 1987, 39 more bells were added when funding was provided under the will of alumnae Hedwig Thusnelda Kniker.

The largest bell of the Kniker Carillon is the 7,350-pound bourdon, which is used to strike the hour. The bell is tuned as a B-flat, and is complemented by the A, F, G and C below middle C when used to play the famous quarter-hourly melody, which are electrically programmed in. The bells ring four times on the first quarter-hour, eight times on the half-hour, 12 times on the three-quarters hour, and 16 times on the hour, plus the hour chime.

Besides being used to announce the time, Tom Anderson, UT's official carillonneur, has been performing 10-minute concerts on the carillon every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 12:50 p.m. since 1967. Unfortunately, one of the clappers is being repaired and the bells will sit quietly until repairs are finished.

UT also houses the Burleson Bells, designed by Paul Garnier of Paris in 1929. These reside near the Bass Concert Hall but have been inoperable since 1991.

On a side note, my research also turned up a place known as the Carillon, a former convent in Austin's former West Coast, now known as Tarryown. Interestingly, though there is a bell tower, there is no mention of there being a bell. The convent was opened in 1958 by the Rose Sisters, an order originally from Holland, who were known for prayer and Gregorian chants. The last mass was in 1983. The building was sold off and has been converted to office space.

May the delight of hearing bells this season bring a smile to your face, joy in your heart, peace on earth, and goodwill to all.

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